



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/026,289	12/19/2001	Bradley W. Johnson	720.505	8117

21707 7590 08/15/2007
IAN F. BURNS & ASSOCIATES
P.O. BOX 71115
RENO, NV 89570

EXAMINER

NGUYEN, DAT

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3714

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
-----------	---------------

08/15/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/026,289

Applicant(s)

JOHNSON ET AL.

Examiner

Dat T. Nguyen

Art Unit

3714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 June 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 101-120 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 101-120 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 06/04/2007 has been entered.

Response to Amendment

This office action is responsive to the amendments filed on 06/04/2007 in which applicant cancels claims 1-100 and adds new claims 101-120. Claims 101-120 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 101 and 112 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Applicant claims a "plasma controller" in claims 101 and 120, however applicant's specification is silent regarding any such

Art Unit: 3714

controllers. For the purposes of furthering prosecution, the examiner will interpret the plasma controller as a standard controller for a display device.

Claim 101 step (I), recites a "device configured to received information..."
examiner believes "received" should be replaced with "receive."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 101, 102, 106, 107, 111, 112, 117 and 118 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vancura (US 6,517,073 B1) in view of Marnell, II (US 5,259,613) and Knust et al. (US 6,848,994 B1).

Regarding claims 101 and 112, Vancura teaches a table game system comprising:

- A gaming table (10) having a plurality of player positions (11) configured to provide a surface for players to place wagers and play a game;
- A table display device positioned to be viewed by players playing at the gaming table and configured to present information to players (12);
- A plasma controller in communication with the table display device (14 and 19);
- A video source, the video sourced configured to provide video information for a plurality of presentations (19 and fig. 3);

Art Unit: 3714

- A table management system computer in communication with the plasma controller, the table management system computer configured to interface with a system operator and to schedule presentations on the table display device. The device of Vancura includes a computer (19) which is used in the claimed manner as illustrated in figure 3 and therefore is also considered the table management system.
- A table interface device configured to allow a dealer to input information (14);
- A player interface device configured to allow a player to input information (16)
- A machine interface device in communication with the player interface device, the machine interface device configured to receive information input into the player interface device (15);
- Wherein the plasma controller (14 and 19) is configured to receive information from the table management system (19) and tuner and cause the table display device to display a plurality of different kinds of presentations, the presentation comprising: an entertainment presentation intended to entertain players playing at a gaming table and a bonus game presentation configured to present information related to a bonus game (4:45-67 and 5:1-30, the presentation of the train moving around the board can also be considered an entertainment presentation).
- Wherein the dealer may cause the table display device to display the bonus game presentation by inputting information into the table interface device and causing the display of the information related to the bonus game (4:38-45).

Vancura is silent regarding a tuner in communication with the video source and the plasma controller, the tuner configured to receive video information and transmit selected video information to the controller. In a related patent, Marnell, II teaches the use of various video sources such as VCRs, live cameras, and commercial television broadcasting to entertain players resulting in player staying considerably longer (abstract, 7:53-61). The video sources of Marnell, II are connected to a video switching system (equivalent to applicant's claimed video controller which is interpreted as Vancura's feature 14 and 19). Marnell, II and Vancura are analogous art because they both relate to casino systems with monitor displays for use in casino entertainment. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to include a tuner in the video display system of Vancura connected to the controller of Vancura in order to entertain players and prolong their playing time whereby increasing revenue for casino owners.

Vancura is further silent regarding a polling unit in communication with the plasma controller, the table interface device and the machine interface device, the polling unit configured to manage and arbitrate communication the devices. In a related patent, Knust et al. teaches the use of polling in casino table games to help assist in tracking gambling habits of patrons at the gaming tables (abstract, figure 1, feature 30). The polling unit collects information related to the player's bet from the player interface devices (betting areas, feature 46) and therefore can be said to be in communication

Art Unit: 3714

with the machine interface devices. Vancura and Knust et al. are analogous art because they both relate to systems for use in casino table games. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to include the polling system of Knust et al. with the gaming table system of Vancura in order to collect information. The combination of the prior art would yield a game table system with a polling unit (Knust's polling system, feature 30) that is in communication with the machine interface devices (individual betting areas, feature 46 of Knust) as well as a table interface device (Knust's feature 64) and the plasma controller (feature 12 of Knust and feature 19 of Vancura) to meet the claimed limitations.

Regarding the limitations of the table interface device transmitting information to the polling unit which in turn transmits the information to the plasma controller to display information related to the bonus game, the combination of the prior art would meet the claimed limitation since the teaching of the table interface device and player interface devices connected to the polling unit are offered by the polling system of Knust et al. as described in further detail above.

Regarding claim 102, commercial television broadcasts including advertisement presentations are inherent to Marnell, II and thus would be obvious to be implemented in the game device of Vanucra as described in further detailed above. One would be motivated to include commercial television broadcasts because they feature popular shows that also include advertisement presentations.

Regarding claim 106 and 117, wherein a player may make a selection related to the play of a bonus game by inputting information into the player interface device (4:49-60)

Regarding claims 107 and 118, Vancura is further silent regarding the entertainment presentation being a sporting event. However, Marnell, II teaches that an entertainment presentation may be provided to players playing a wagering game to keep them interested in staying at the wagering game for a longer period of time (2:60-67). Vancura and Marnell, II are analogous art as described above, therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to include the sporting presentations of Marnell, II with the presentation of Vancura in order to entice players to play at the gaming table for a longer period of time whereby increasing casino revenue.

Regarding claim 111, Vancura is silent regarding the table management system being configured to receive scheduling and content information from an operator to cause the plasma controller to display presentations in accordance with the scheduling information and content. Marnell, II teaches a management system wherein an operator may control the content and scheduling of the video presentations (6:21-48). Vancura and Marnell, II are analogous art as described above, therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to allow the table management system of Vancura to receive scheduling and content information from an operator since it would alleviate the workload of the casino dealer and allow the dealer to concentrate on running the game.

Claims 103-105 and 114-116 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vancura in view of Marnell, II and Knust et al. as applied to claim 101 above, and further in view of Dettor (US 5,564,701).

The prior art meets the claimed limitations as described above. The prior art fails to explicitly disclose the presentation comprising a banner presentation, scrolling text, and a bitmap image. However, in a related patent, Dettor teaches a betting game with a display wherein the display provides a presentation about the game in a ticker format. It is well known and understood in the art that a ticker display constitutes as a banner presentation and a scrolling text presentation. Dettor and Vancura are analogous art because they both teach methods and apparatus for games of chance associated with a large display. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to include the ticker display of Dettor in the game of Vancura to display pertinent information to the players during different parts of the game.

Furthermore, Vancura does not expressly disclose that the presentation comprises a bitmap image. At the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to a person of ordinary skill in the art to provide the presentation comprising a bitmap image because applicant does not disclose the bitmap image to provide an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected the

Art Unit: 3714

video presentation of Vancura utilizing a computer (19) and LCD (12) or the claimed bitmap image to perform the same function of displaying game information to the player. Therefore it would have been prima facie obvious to modify Vancura to obtain the invention as specified in claim 105 and 116 because such a modification would have been considered a mere design consideration with fails to patentably distinguish over the prior art of Vancura.

Claims 108-110, 119 and 120 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vancura in view of Marnell, II and Knust et al. as applied to claim 101 above, and further in view of Izumi et al. (US 4,725,977).

The prior art meets the claimed limitations as described above. The prior art fails to explicitly disclose:

- The plasma controller comprising a storage device configured to store presentation information and the plasma controller is configured to retrieve presentation information from the storage device and transmit the information to the table display device.
- Wherein the table management system is configured to determine if the plasma controller has a file stored on the storage device that is to be used in a presentation.
- Wherein if the plasma controller does not have the file to be used in the presentation, the table management system is configured to transmit the file to be used in the presentation to the plasma controller.

Art Unit: 3714

In a relate patent, Izumi et al. teaches a game system wherein a host can update files on a plurality of remote gaming terminals as required by the users or game (2:1-25). Izumi et al. further teaches that the remote terminals (plasma controllers) also comprise a memory for storing presentation and game information (2:38-49). The host (table management system) responds to information requests and if the required gaming data is not present in the remote terminals, the information is then sent to the remote terminals (3:35-47). Izumi et al. and Vancura are analogous art because they both teach systems for play of games stored in memory. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to include the features of a host checking and transmitting pertinent information for the play of the game of Vancura. One would be motivated to combine the references in order to minimize the required hardware and associated memory since the individual terminals would only require limited amounts of memory and other data can be downloaded from the host. Furthermore, games can be updated on the table from the host without the need to reprogram each table individually.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 101-120 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

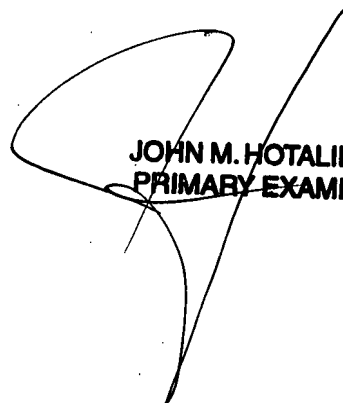
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dat T. Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-2178. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-5pm.

Art Unit: 3714

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert E. Pezzuto can be reached on (571)272-6996. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Dat Nguyen



JOHN M. HOTALING, II
PRIMARY EXAMINER